

Message Text

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54

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 SAM-01 COA-02 ACDA-19 DRC-01 /126 W

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R 191442Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1450

INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY REKJAVIK

USMISSION NATO

UNCLAS STOCKHOLM 672

E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SW, IC

SUBJ: ICELANDIC MINISTER AT NORDIC COUNCIL MEETING

SUMMARY: ICELANDIC INDUSTRY MINISTER MAGNUS KJARTANSSON STIRRED UP LIVELY DEBATE HERE OVER HIS ATTACK ON OTHER NORDIC COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY NORWAY, IN NORDIC COUNCIL MEETING FEB. 17. ALTHOUGH ROUNDLY CRITICIZED BY MOST OF THE OTHER NORDIC COUNTRIES' REPRESENTATIVES, KJARTANSSON WON PRAISE FROM ONE SWEDISH NEWSPAPER FOR BREAKING THE RULE THAT FOREIGN POLICY AND POLITICAL ISSUES ARE NOT TO BE BROUGHT UP IN NORDIC COUNCIL, A RULE WHICH MANY HOLD RESPONSIBLE FOR THE INEFFECTUALNESS OF THE COUNCIL. END SUMMARY.

1. TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS NOT AVAILABLE UNTIL FEB. 20, BUT PRESS REPORTS KJARTANSSON MADE FOLLOWING POINTS:

A) "NORWAY HAS DECLARED IT WANTS FOREIGN TROOPS ON ICELAND TO KEEP THE BALANCE OF POWER. WHY CANNOT THESE FORCES THEN BE STATIONED IN NORWAY?" B) HE GENERALLY UNCLASSIFIED

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CRITICIZED ALL NORDIC COUNTRIES FOR LACK OF SOLIDARITY

WITH ICELAND REGARDING EXTENSION OF FISHING LIMIT.

2. HIS ATTACK LED TO ONE OF HARSHTEST DEBATES EVER RECORDED IN NORDIC COUNCIL, WITH NEWSPAPERS HEADLINING "QUARREL ABOUT 'PROHIBITED' QUESTION" (SVENSKA DAGBLADET) AND "ICELANDIC OUTBURST ABOUT KEFLAVIK BASE" (DAGENS NYHETER). BOTH PAPERS IDENTIFIED THE MINISTER AS A COMMUNIST.

3. DURING DEBATE, SEVERAL SPEAKERS, INCLUDING NORWEGIAN PRIME MINISTER TRYGVE BRATTELI, CRITICIZED KJARTANSSON FOR BRINGING UP FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES AND ONLY NORWEGIAN FINN GUSTAVSSON OF SOCIALIST PEOPLE'S PARTY SPOKE IN APPROVAL. ICELANDIC OPPOSITION POLITICIAN GYLFI GISLASON STATED THAT KJARTANSSON DID NOT SPEAK ON BEHALF OF THE ICELANDIC PEOPLE OR THE GOVERNMENT IN THE KEFLAVIK ISSUE, BUT ONLY FOR HIS OWN PARTY. FORMER DANISH FOREIGN MINISTER K.B. ANDERSEN CALLED KJARTANSSON'S SPEECH "A VOICE FROM THE GRAVE, A SPEECH REFLECTING THE NARROW CHAUVINISM OF THE EUROPEAN POLITICAL LEFT."

4. LIBERAL GOTEBORGS-POSTEN IN AN EDITORIAL COMMENTARY SAID IT WAS POSSIBLE KJARTANSSON HAD HURT THE CAUSE OF NORDIC COOPERATION, BUT PAPER FOUND IT "REFRESHING TO LISTEN TO AN ANGRY ICELANDER SPEAKING IN PLAIN LANGUAGE FOR A FEW MINUTES," CONTRASTED WITH THE "ENDLESS HARANGUES ABOUT NORDIC COOPERATION AND UNDERSTANDING". KJARTANSSON'S SPEECH THREW A REVEALING LIGHT OVER THE DILEMMA OF THE NORDIC COUNCIL, GOTEBORGS-POSTEN CONTINUED. "ESSENTIAL ISSUES, LIKE FOREIGN POLICIES AND TRADE POLICIES MUST NOT BE DISCUSSED, SINCE IT SHOWS WITH AWKWARD CLARITY HOW NARROWLY LIMITED NORDIC COOPERATION IS IN REALITY".

5. SO FAR NONE OF STOCKHOLM DAILIES HAS HAD EDITORIAL COMMENT. SWEDISH GOVERNMENT DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN DEBATE NOR MAKE ITS POSITION KNOWN, SO FAR AS WE NOW KNOW.
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